

Headmaster Snape

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Summary: Snape has been headmaster for only a few hours, and already there is trouble-not from the students, but from the Carrows.

Headmaster Snape

A/N: Written for the Quidditch League Fanfiction Competition Season 4 Round 1 as Chaser 2 for the Caerphilly Catapults.

Prompt: Where My Death Eaters At? - Death Eater (Severus Snape) at work.

Optional Prompts: 2. (word) "unpleasant," 3. (quote) "When you pay attention to boredom, it gets unbelievably interesting." - Jon Kabat-Zinn, 15. (dialogue) "I should warn you..."

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><p>Severus Snape dashed down the stairs in the Entrance Hall and made for the dungeons, his black robes billowing behind him. It was the first day of Harry Potter's seventh year of Hogwartsâ€"or, it would have been, if he and his friends hadn't gone into hiding. The start of term banquet had been held earlier in the evening. Curfew would arrive in less than five minutes, and Snape met no stragglers. He would have liked to think that the obedience was due to his presence alone, but more likely it was due to the unpleasant presence of the Carrow siblings. Classes would resume the next day.</p>

The Dark Lord had entrusted Snape with the safety of the castle, and the Carrows had been given permission to use any means in their wide repertoire to punish any students who threatened his control. They were little more than henchmen, not good for much beyond corporal punishment, and they were inclined to get carried away. It was up to him to ensure that they did not damage anything or anyone in the

castle beyond repair, which was precisely why he was running in such an undignified fashion down to the dungeons.

He had just only just escaped a tirade from Minerva McGonagall, who had burst into his office to tell him that the Carrows were currently holding a detention for a single student.

He now flung the heavy doors open with a wave of his wand and barked, "Amycus! Alecto!" This outburst drew the attention of the two sadistic siblings away from their victim—Ginny Weasley.

"Told you he wouldn't last the night without gettin' in the way!" Alecto muttered to her brother, who rolled his eyes before flipping a Knut into her outstretched hand.

Snape ignored this and turned to Weasley.

"Out of my sight."

She seemed eager to obey that particular order, but Alecto's grimy hand tightened on her jumper, halting her progress.

"Release her, Professor Carrow!" he said more forcefully, and Alecto reluctantly let go. Weasley scampered away with little difficulty.

"What's going on?"

"I want a word," he snarled, closing the door.

"All right, Snape!" Alecto spat, "We're doing our jobs, ain't we? We were makin' an example out of her."

Severus took a calming breath through his considerable nose. "As I believe I explained this morning, I will not interfere with your disciplinary methods unless I deem it absolutely necessary," he told them, sneering. "But I am afraid that this demonstrates a considerable lack of brainpower, even for you."

"What?" Amycus snapped.

"Not only have you completely circumvented the structure of discipline at Hogwarts by singling out a student for detention before she could possibly have done anything wrong—a system which the Dark Lord indicated that he wanted to remain intact for the time being!" He paused, glaring at each in turn, "But also, had you proceeded you might have jeopardized the ongoing search for Potter."

"What, 'cause of her brother?" Amycus laughed, "Clearly you haven't seen what we're capable of, Snape. I mean, granted, it'll take a few sessions, but if you let us do what needs to be done, the girl'll tell us everything she knows."

"_That_," he bellowed, "Is precisely why I am charged with monitoring your actions. What you fail to realize is that Miss Weasley was known to be in a romantic relationship with Mr. Potter, and in our current position, we may need to use this information to lure Potter to the school to complete the Dark Lord's plans."

"Well, all the more reason to let us work on 'er, right?" Alecto put

in.

Snape did not dignify the protest with a direct answer, saying only, "_If _the Weasley girl is damaged in any way, I should warn you that I will not hesitate to let the Dark Lord know of your involvement, and I am sure he will administer a suitable punishment for deliberately disobeying his orders."

"Come on, Snape, we won't harm the little blood-traitor permanently," Amycus assured him.

"You will not harm her at all."

"Butâ€" "

"I am aware that she may attempt to provoke you, but she, and any of her friends, which by now includes most of Gryffindor house, are not to be physically punished for their actions until further notice."

"What?" Alecto squealed.

"You've got to be kiddin', Snape. What're we supposed to be doing here if we can't do our jobs?" Amycus asked.

"We'll be bored," Alecto whinged.

"I findâ€|" he said as threateningly as he could, "That when you pay attention to boredom, it gets unbelievably interestingâ€| It may even inspire you to find a more creative way to loosen the children's tongues."

The Carrows looked at each other mutinously, but grunted their agreement. Snape was left in doubt that they had understood him. They trudged past him out of the dungeon, muttering between themselves and shooting him dark looks as they went.

Snape wearily returned to his desk, nursing a headache that seemed likely to remain as long as he had the combined intellect of the Carrows to deal with. He summoned a bottle of firewhiskey and a glass from a cabinet across the room, and poured some for himself. He glanced up at the portrait frame that hung over his desk; while the other headmasters were sleeping, Dumbledore was elsewhere. Of course. With a bitter last look at the empty canvas, Severus drained the glass.

End
file.